

# Stand alone VCT: Bridging the Gap to Care



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# Background

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- New start is a network of non-medical VCT centres in Durban, JHB and Cape Town.
- Trying to reach those who do not go to clinics and to bring VCT out of medical settings
- Overall positivity rate – 15%.
- New Start Durban has the highest positivity rate – 22%
- About 50% of positive clients came from Durban site



# Linkages

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- New Start does not offer any other service besides VCT
- Biggest problem for any stand-alone VCT: link to care
- Each site is linked to more than 100 referral centres – site-specific referral guides
- Referral centres offer specific post test services e.g. treatment, care, support



# At the site

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- We offer non medical
  - TB screening
  - STI screening
- All positive clients screened for TB
- Tb screening form attached to referral form



# Referral

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- Clients are referred according to their needs and their wishes e.g. referrals can be to private practitioners or to public health centres of their choice.
- Clients can also come back to New Start for supportive counseling.



# Challenges

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- Ensuring that people get to the referral centres
- That clients who test positive get their CD4 count done early
- Public hospitals overwhelmed with sick clients
- Clients who are not feeling sick might find it difficult to wait in queues



# New Start Durban pilot

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- New Start Durban has an MOU with a private lab in the city
- New Start staff collect blood samples for CD4 count.
- Lab collects the samples and brings back results
- Counselor give clients their results and refers them accordingly



# Process

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- When a client opts for the private lab:
  - The client is given the lab's bank deposit slip
  - They deposit the fees for the tests (R67 for CD4 count)
  - They bring back a copy of the deposit slip
  - New Start lab staff then draw the blood samples





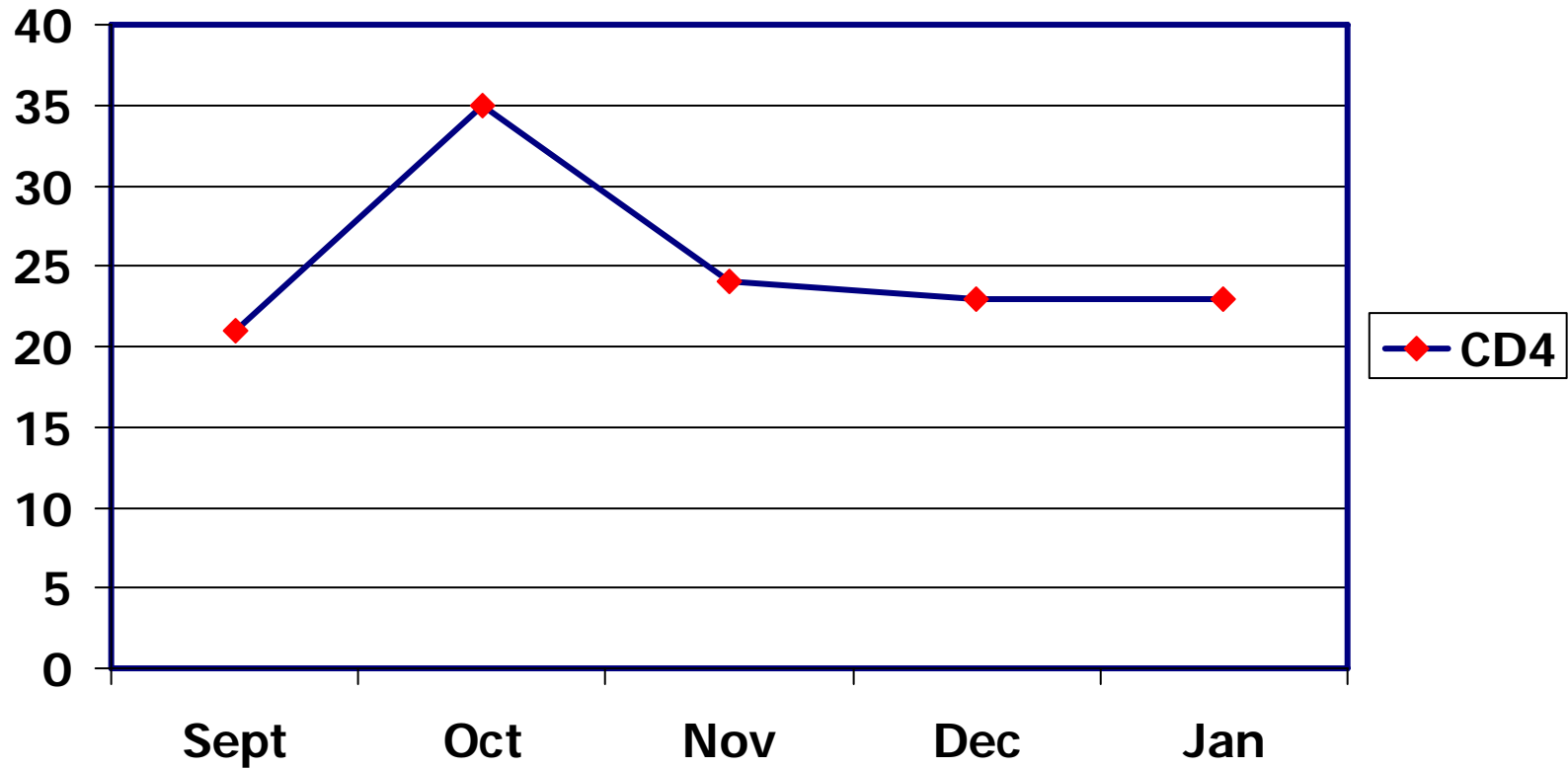
## Process cont'd

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- The private lab collects samples from New Start and brings back results.
- Counselors give the results
  - If CD4 count is below 250 the client is referred immediately to treatment centres.
  - If CD4 count is very high then emphasis is on positive living and client is encouraged to retest after 3 months



# Performance so far





# Benefits

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- Saves time for clients
- Clients get more healthy living counseling
- Clients get support from people they know for a little longer
- Clients get counseling on the importance of CD4 counts and monitoring the virus
- Most stand alone VCT clients are still healthy and this saves time for hospital staff who should focus on sicker clients



# Summary

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- Link to care = biggest problem for stand alone VCT
- Ways to address this: Referrals  
Coordinators, Referral Guides,  
relationships with referral partners, STI  
and TB screening, pilot projects like  
Durban's CD4 project



# Thank you

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